

THE RICKMAN REPORT

NEWS FROM DISTRICT 5



A New Year, A Stronger District 5

A new year brings fresh opportunity and a moment to reflect on what we have accomplished together while looking ahead to the work still to come.

From Tracy and Mountain House to Ripon and Escalon, District 5 continues to show strength, pride, and a deep sense of local identity. San Joaquin County enters the year from a position of strength—focused on protecting quality of life, being responsible with taxpayer dollars, and investing in the infrastructure and services that keep our communities safe and connected.

In the months ahead, we will continue tackling cost-of-living pressures, supporting families, businesses, and agriculture, improving transportation corridors, and prioritizing public safety. My focus remains on ensuring the voices and needs of District 5 are clearly heard and reflected in the decisions we make.

Thank you for your trust and engagement. As always, it is an honor to serve you, and I remain committed to working hard every day on behalf of District 5.

I invite you to view my [2025 Year in Review](#) highlighting projects, initiatives, and investments we accomplished together across District 5.

- Robert Rickman

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Stay Informed

**Upcoming Board Meeting
Agendas available online at:**

<https://sjgov.link/bos-agenda>



Pacific Gateway Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Public comment period for the Gateway Project Draft EIR closed December 22, 2025. More than 30 public comments and 12 agency letters were received on the Draft EIR, including from the City of Tracy, San Joaquin LAFCo, Caltrans, Farm Bureau, Stanislaus COG, Sierra Club, as well as several law firms.

Next steps for the project include:

- Review of comments received on the Pacific Gateway DEIR by the project EIR consultant, and completion of a Final EIR;
- Scheduling a noticed public hearing before the County Planning Commission, who would make a recommendation on certification of the EIR documentation and project application entitlements to the County Board of Supervisors; and
- Scheduling a noticed public hearing before the Board of Supervisors for consideration of EIR certification and action on the project.

Documents and Updates

- No public hearing dates have been set at this time. Updates will be shared as they become available.
- Staff anticipates commencing with a Planning Commission hearing as soon as Summer 2026.
- Project documents are available for review online at:
<https://sjgov.org/departments/cdd/planning/documents>.

COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

San Joaquin General Hospital Celebrates U.S. Top Honors in Maternity Care and Patient Safety

San Joaquin General Hospital recently earned a High Performing designation in Maternity Care from U.S. News & World Report and achieved a zero catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI) rate from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) — making it one of only two hospitals in San Joaquin County to earn both distinctions. See press release [here](#).

San Joaquin County Takes Action to Strengthen Wildfire Preparedness

San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services will lead the development and implementation of the County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan in collaboration with a planning team that will include the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and key local partners. Read more [here](#)



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LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY: MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD



Appeals Court Shoots Down California Water Managers' Plan to Finance Delta Tunnel

I am encouraged by the recent decision from the California Third District Court of Appeal, which confirmed that the Department of Water Resources does not have the legal authority to issue billions of dollars in bonds for the proposed Delta tunnel project without explicit legislative approval.

As a member of the Delta Counties Coalition, San Joaquin County fought for and supports this ruling. This decision is an important step in protecting our local communities and ensuring that large-scale projects like the Delta tunnel are subject to proper oversight and accountability. You can read the full Sacramento Bee article [here](#) and the Delta Counties Coalition statement [here](#).

Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) 2027 General Rate Case (GRC)

Last year, I wrote – [letter can be viewed here](#) – to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to express opposition to PG&E's 2027 GRC application to increase revenues to cover natural gas and electric operations, distribution, and generation costs for 2027–2030 and urged that they reject it.

At my request, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors formally urged the CPUC to reject PG&E's proposed rate increase scheduled for January 1, 2027. Since 2021, PG&E rates have risen nearly 40%, putting added pressure on local households. With a per capita income \$10,000 below the state average, many residents face difficult choices between essential needs like heating, cooling, and prescriptions. In 2022-2023, the County provided \$7.3 million in emergency utility assistance to over 6,300 low-income households. The Board emphasized that utility rates must remain "just and reasonable" and called on PG&E and the CPUC to prioritize the community's needs over profits.

You may submit comments electronically to the CPUC using the "Add Public Comment" button on the "Public Comment" tab of the Docket Card for A.25-05-009. See public comments: <https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/A2505009>

I have worked on establishing a collaborative relationship with PG&E and its staff while continuing my efforts to hold PG&E accountable, fighting for fair and justifiable rates for San Joaquin County ratepayers. Thus, I am pleased to share that on January 1, 2026, residential electric rates were scheduled to decrease about 5% for customers who get both electricity supply and delivery service from PG&E, compared to 2025 rates.

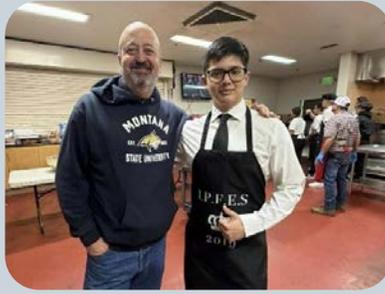
Additionally, PG&E is providing more bill relief in 2026 to help customers pay overdue energy bills through its [Relief for Energy Assistance through Community Help \(REACH\)](#) and [Match My Payment programs](#). For more income-eligible assistance programs, visit pge.com/billhelp.



Sign up for emergency
alerts at
www.sjready.org

TRACY

- Muddy Paws Grooming Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
- Tracy African American Association's Annual Installation of Officers
- Tracy High student Abigail Avila's Senior FFA Project Presentation
- Chabad of Tracy Jewish Center-Evening with Holocaust Survivor Leon Malmed
- D.A.R.E. Graduations at Wicklund & Cordes Elementary Schools
- HQ Air Force JROTC Unit Assessment of West High School JROTC & Cadet Mission Briefing
- Aura IV & Wellness Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
- I.P.F.E.S. of Tracy Crab Feed
- TUSD Black Student Union's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast
- Annual Tracy Community Recognition Awards Gala
- BSA Troop 537 Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Aaryan Singh Rawat
- 17th Annual Tracy Firefighters Charity Crab Feed



RIPON

- District Office Hours
- Business Check-In with The Little Cottage Antiques & Gifts
- Mountain Mike's Pizza Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting



MOUNTAIN HOUSE

- Scouting Foundation Pack 511 – Troop 511 Winter Court of Honor and Check Presentation (\$12,461)
- Mountain House United's Dr. Martin Luther King's Dream Event
- D.A.R.E. Graduations at Questa and Bethany Elementary Schools



ESCALON

- Weekly District Office Hours
- Business & Community Check-In with Escalon High School & Wonderfully Made Boutique
- Networking Coffee with City of Escalon



COUNTYWIDE MEETINGS AND EVENTS (PARTIAL LIST)

- Valley Link Rail Project Updates Town Hall
- San Joaquin Building Trades Council MC3 Program Graduation
- 8th Annual End It Summit – Human Trafficking in Major Sporting Events
- San Joaquin County Fire Chiefs Association Collaborator’s Meeting
- San Joaquin County Sheriff’s Office Promotion(s) Ceremony
- Recognized Religious Freedom Day
- CALCOG Board Meeting
- San Joaquin County AgVenture
- Recognized National Cancer Prevention Month
- Ava Community Energy Board of Directors Meeting

